of Industrial Costs and Prices.

(b) The prices of raw materials have increased due to increase in the prices of basic inputs.

(c) Government have been constantly reviewing and monitoring the prices of these fibres/yarns and have periodically convened meetings between Spinners and Weavers with a view to ensure reasonable prices of these fibres/Yarns.

Export of Pharmaceutical Products to USSR

1477. SHRI RAJENDRA KUMAR SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the export of pharmaceutical products to the USSR has been negligible during the last two years;

(b) if so, whether any USSR team visited India to discuss the modalities for this purpose; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No Sir, on the other hand, exports of pharmaceuticals to USSR have increased from Rs. 81.9 crore in 1988 to Rs. 170.6 crore in 1989 and Rs. 358.5 crore in 1990.

(b) and (c). Delegation from USSR have been visiting India from time to time for trade promotion activities.

Length of State Highways converted into National Highways in Uttar Pradesh

1478. SHRI RAJENDRA KUMAR SHARMA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state the total length of State Highways in Uttar Pradesh converted into National Highways during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): No State Highway was included in the National Highway grid in U.P. during the last three years.

Disposal of Confiscated Goods

1479. SHRI RAJENDRA KUMAR SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the stock of confiscated goods with the Government as on November, 1, 1991;

(b) the procedure adopted for disposal of these goods; and

(c) the period by which the above confiscated goods are likely to be disposed of?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Confiscated goods worth Rs. 166.74 crores approximately were in stock with the Customs Department on 30th September, 1991. The information about the total stock as on 1st November, 1991, is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) Seized/confiscated gold and silver are deposited with the Government of India Mints. Trade goods are sold in public actions. Consumer goods are sold in bulk to the National Consumers' Co-operative Federation and other Cooperative Societies. Such goods are also offered for sale to military/police/para-military canteens. A small portion of confiscated consumer goods are also sold in retail through Customs retails shops on a first-come-first-serve basis. Priority is given to bulk sales for obtaining quick returns to avoid deterioration of the goods with the

Passage of time, for optimum utilisation of storage space, etc.

(c) No precise time-limit can be stipulated for disposal of the above confiscated goods since such disposal depends upon various factors which include completion of all departmental/court proceedings.

Premature Retirement of Medical Officers in Armed Forces

1480. SHRI C.P. MUDALAGIRIYAPPA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of medical officers in the armed forces seeking premature retiremant is on the increase:

(b) if so, the number of medical officers retired during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Government have taken any steps to find out the reasons for seeking pre-mature retirement by medical officers; and

(d) whether the Government propose to fix a minimum period of ten years compulsory service for the medical officers in the armed forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b). The number of medical officers who sought and were granted premature retirement during the last three years is as follow:-

Year	*Number of officers who sough premature retirement*	*Number of officers granted premature retirement*
1988	57	44
1989	84	38
1990	72	29

(c) The officers are required to specifically mention the reasons for seeking premature retirement. Reasons generally put forth are supersession or compassionate family circumstances.

(d) No, Sir. Each case is viewed on its merit.

[Translation]

Crisis in Handloom Industry in U.P.

1481. SHRI RAM BADAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the handloom industry in eastern districts of Varanasi, Mau and Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh is facing crisis;

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to provide a solid base to the collapsing handloom industry; and to promote the export of handloom products, particularly Banarasi Sarees; and

(c) the names of the countries to which Banarasi sarees are being exported and the quantum of exports during the last three years, year-wise?